



# STATE REPRESENTATIVE SHERRY APPLETON



## 23rd DISTRICT 2006 SESSION PREVIEW

Dear Neighbors,

Well first and foremost I would like to wish you all a Happy Holiday Season! It is that time of year again. We are heading back to Olympia for another legislative session.

This past year serving as your representative in Olympia has been an amazing experience. I am very proud of all we were able to accomplish and I am excited to get back down to Olympia to continue to work for you.

In this update I would like to share some of the changes we have made in the last year as well as some the things I have planned for the upcoming session.

I would also like to encourage you to share your opinion on what I should be working on in Olympia by filling out and returning the attached questions.

Finally, if you have time I would love for you to attend the town hall meetings I have scheduled on January 7<sup>th</sup>.

Again thank you for the honor to serve as your elected representative. It has truly been a privilege.

Have a Happy New Year!

Sherry Appleton  
State Representative  
23<sup>rd</sup> Legislative District

### REPRESENTATIVE SHERRY APPLETON

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### COME JOIN ME FOR A TOWN HALL!

I am having two Town Hall Meetings on  
**Saturday, January 7th**

The first is at the  
**Central Kitsap Fire & Rescue Office,**  
5300 N W Newberry Hill Rd. Silverdale, WA 98383  
from **10 AM - 11:30 AM.**

The second one is at the  
**Bainbridge Fire Department,**  
12985 Phelps Rd, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110,  
from **1:00 PM - 2:30 PM.**



#### Questions about Medicare Part D???

I will have two representatives from the Insurance Commissioner's Office who will be at the Town Halls to answer questions on an individual basis.

### THIS PAST YEAR WAS A TREMENDOUS SUCCESS!

In the last year we passed many new pieces of legislation that will help make Washington a better place to live and raise a family. By investing today we are making sure we have a bright future.

✓ **Education:** Overall, the 2005 Legislature increased state funding for Washington's public schools by \$981 million – about \$468 per student which means an estimated \$16 million in additional funding for our Kitsap County schools.

✓ **Health care:** We passed legislation that will provide health care for an additional 38,750 uninsured children as well as prescription drug relief for seniors that will save taxpayers upwards of \$100 million.

✓ **Jobs:** I supported legislation to create the Job Development Fund which provides grants to cities, towns and other government entities for projects that create local jobs, stimulate economic development, and promote community growth.

✓ **Helping our Soldiers:** We granted property tax relief for widows and widowers of honorably discharged veterans as well as property tax exemptions for those who are disabled in combat.

✓ **Fighting Meth:** A new law restricts access to the cold and allergy medications used to "cook" meth. A similar law in Oklahoma reduced meth lab incidents by 80 percent.

### WHAT'S UP FOR THIS YEAR?

#### Washington Learns

Last year the legislature created Washington Learns an 18-month comprehensive education study to take a tough look at our state's education system. It examined early learning through K-12, to higher education and made recommendations on how our system can improve. The program brought together educators, business leaders, community advocates and administrative officials and they have come up with some recommendations that we will be considering in the upcoming session such as:



- Streamlining the transition points in our educational system pre-kindergarten all the way through college.
- Working on alternatives to the WASL so that children who do not test well will not automatically fail to graduate.
- Ways to ensure that our high schools are preparing students for the workforce as well as college. A close look needs to be made at how to get our students to adequate math levels.

#### Early Learning

A child's early years are a time of tremendous growth and development, and their early learning experiences have profound implications for their later success in school and in life.

Researchers tell us we have it backwards. The older a child gets, the more we spend on their education. It costs about \$6,000 a year to educate a child from elementary school through high school. A year at UW or Western costs roughly \$10,000 a year. But investing a little money from birth to age five actually gives us the best return on our money.

Thirty percent of children are behind from the day they start kindergarten and many never catch up. This year we will be looking at ways to better our state's early learning system so that every child is ready to succeed.

#### Health care

As a member of the health care committee I will continue the fight to lower our health care costs.



- **Cover all Kids (2010):** I will continue my commitment to get all the children of Washington state health care coverage. This does not mean that they will just all be covered by the state. We will be looking at ways to help businesses be able to offer health plans to their employees and families.
- **Purchasing for quality/other efficiencies:** Like the efforts we made in previous sessions to save Washington millions in health care costs by purchasing prescription drugs in bulk, we will be examining additional means to save the state and taxpayers money on our Basic Health Plan.
- **Small business premium sharing:** Small businesses do not have the buying power to be able to bargain lower rates with health care providers. We will be looking at ways to help them pool together to help drive down premium costs.





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STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
SHERRY APPLETON

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Energy Assistance

Last year, gas cost about \$2 a gallon. It eventually reached upwards of \$3, and that extra money gave oil companies record profits in the last year. They took advantage of troubled times to gouge consumers. We are looking for new alternative ways our state can increase our energy independence by:

- giving incentives for citizens, businesses and governments to use hybrid vehicles and cleaner fuels like biodiesel and biogas (ethanol);
- jump-starting a local market for biodiesel and biogas so our local farmers benefit; and
- passing reforms to encourage clean, cheap, renewable power like wind and solar.

We know this technology works. Our local school buses are running on cleaner fuel so our kids aren’t breathing dirty fumes. It is time for Washington to do its part.

Ensuring Warm Homes

Congressional leaders in Washington D.C. are considering a Federal Budget that funds many vital governmental programs. One of those programs is the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program otherwise known as LIHEAP.

In recent budgets the federal government has devoted approximately \$2 billion dollars each year to this program to lend assistance to low income households who struggle to pay their heating bills each winter.



In the wake of Hurricane Katrina the federal Energy Information Administration predicts that consumers can expect to spend anywhere from 50 to 70 percent more in energy costs this winter depending on where you live. This year the state will be looking at funding a one time supplement to increase this energy assistance fund to help out Washington’s needy. No one deserves to go cold this winter.

Emergency Preparedness

Everyone’s seen the devastating mix of disaster and poverty that happened in New Orleans and wondered, “Are we safe here in Washington?” This session we are going to be looking at what our state can do to ensure that we are ready in case disaster strikes.

Experts tell us we can’t expect the federal government to send help for at least 36 hours when a natural disaster strikes. That means we need to make sure state agencies, counties and cities are working together to quickly respond to any emergencies.

Roads and bridges in our state need to be bolstered so (a) they don’t fall down in an earthquake and cripple our economy, and (b) they can handle the load if we need to evacuate.

Finally we need to give local police and firefighters the information and resources they need so we’re all working off the same page.



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

I’m interested in your thoughts and opinions. Please take a minute to share your views.

Priority: What issue should the Legislature focus on during the 2006 session?

- ☐ Education
- ☐ Transportation
- ☐ Environment
- ☐ Health care
- ☐ Public Safety
- ☐ Other

Philosophy: How do you think the Legislature should approach issues?

- ☐ Hands off – the state should keep its hands off the economy and our personal freedoms
- ☐ Progressive – equal opportunity in education and jobs; liberty and tolerance for all
- ☐ Conservative – hands off the economy, but enforce moral and ethical standards
- ☐ Hands on – the state should protect equal opportunity while enforcing moral and ethical standards

Vision: If you could do anything, what would you accomplish by 2010?

- ☐ Universal health care
- ☐ Safer neighborhoods
- ☐ No more clear-cutting
- ☐ Lower taxes
- ☐ Free college tuition
- ☐ Passenger trains statewide
- ☐ End discrimination
- ☐ Universal pre-school

Do you think the State should help with public funding for a NASCAR track here in Kitsap County?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Comments:

Name: E-mail:

Please fold so return mail panel is showing, affix stamp and mail. Thanks.